

Message Text

SECRET

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 L-03 DRC-01 SSO-00 /068 W

----- 079077

P 280433Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6268

S E C R E T BANGKOK 13873

SECSTATE ALSO PASS NSC

E.O. 11652: GDS-82

TAGS: MILI, MOPS, TH

SUBJ: CONTRACT AIRLIFT SUPPORT - CAMBODIA (U)

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION JCS WASHDC PHNOM PENH - INFO CSAF CHMEDTC
PHNOM PENH BANGKOK DSAA WASHDC SECDEF CINCPACUSSAG7AF NKP
FROM COMUSMACTHAI BKK THAI P 260425Z AUG 74 REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION
QUOTE

S E C R E T /MACTDC

CONTRACT AIRLIFT SUPPORT-CAMBODIA(U)

A. COMUSMACTHAI 141130Z AUG 74

B. COMUSMACTHAI 201030Z AUG 74

C. COMUSMACTHAI 220141Z AUG 74

1. (S) SATURDAY, 24 AUG LOCAL, A MEETING WAS HELD BETWEEN GENERAL KRIANGSAK, CHIEF OF STAFF THAI SUPREME COMMAND (FWD) AND MR. THAPPAN NGIN, THE GKR NATIONAL DEFENSE MINISTER. GENERAL ADERHOLT, DEPCOMUSMACTHAI, WAS INVITED AS AN OBSERVER. THE DISCUSSION WAS ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AIRLIFT CONTRACT AND TOOK PLACE IN GENERAL KRIANGSAK'S HOME FROM 1800 TO 2300 HOURS.
2. (S) THIS MEETING WAS SET UP BY GENERAL KRIANGSAK AFTER EARLIER MEETINGS BETWEEN MACT, TAC AND AMERICAN EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE ADVISABILITY OF TAC-AIR CAMBODIA CONTRACTS IN CAMBODIA(REF B). PRESENT AT THE 24 SEP MEETING WERE GENERAL KRIANGSAK, MR. THAPPANA NGIN, COLONEL IM CHHOGDETH, KHMER LIAISON TO SUPREME COMMAND HQ (FWD), MAJOR L.H. TIFVERMAN, MACTHAI LIAISON TO SUPREME COMMAND

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HQ (FWD).

3. (S) IT IS SIGNIFICANT TO NOTE THAT THIS WAS A THAI-INITIATED MEETING AND WAS PRIMARILY THAI-CAMBODIAN NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S. PRESENTATION ON THE SIDELINES. THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION, THERE APPEARED TO BE COMPLETE MUTUAL AGREEMENT ON THE NEED AND METHODS PROPOSED. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS ONE OF CORDIALITY, PERHAPS BECAUSE KRIANGSAK AND THAPPANA HAVE KNOWN AND RESPECTED EACH OTHER FOR A GOOD MANY YEARS.

4. (S) GENERAL KRIANGSAK VERY CAREFULLY EXPLAINED THE DIFFICULTIES HE ENCOUNTERED TRYING TO OBTAIN CONSENSUS APPROVAL FROM THE MFA. THE FINAL DECISION TO APPROVE THE PROJECT BY THE PRIME MINISTER WAS BROUGHT ABOUT THRU DEFENSE MINISTRY EFFORTS WITHOUT THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

5. (S) NEXT, HE EXPLAINED THE THAI-CAMBODIAN ROLES IN THE PROPOSED AIRLIFT OPERATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE THAIS ARE REALLY ONLY PLAYING A MINOR ROLE, I.E. TO PROVIDE U-TAPAO AS THE OPERATION BASE AND TO PROVIDE AN ADMIN "UMBRELLA".

6 (S) MR. THAPPANA WAS ADVISED THAT THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES WERE TO BE LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING: IN THE EVENT OF ANY FLIGHT INCIDENT, I.E. SHOOT-DOWN OR MECHANICAL FAILURE, WHICH COULD RESULT IN ADVERSE PUBLICITY TO EITHER THE THAI OR U.S. GOVERNMENT, THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD ACCEPT FULL RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT THE INCIDENT AS INVOLVING AN AIR-CAMBODIA LICENSED AIRCRAFT AND CREW OPERATING UNDER CONTROL OF THE GKR. THAPPANA CONCURRED AND AGREED TO PROVIDE KRIANGSAK WITH GKR'S APPROVAL FOR THE AIRCRAFT TO OPERATE IN CAMBODIA UNDER AIR CAMBODIA SPONSORSHIP NLT TUESDAY, 27 AUG, LOCAL. TO THIS END GENERAL ADERHOLT PROVIDED THAPPANA WITH FIVE AIRCRAFT TAIL NUMBERS (COORD W/374TAW) TO BE USED IN THE OPERATION.

7. (S) INCLUDED IN THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN THE 24 AUG MEETING, MR. THAPPANA WAS ADVISED THAT USAF SAR RESPONSIBILITIES IN SUPPORT OF THIS AIRLIFT PROJECT WOULD BE TERMINATED UPON THE PHASE-IN OF CIVILIAN C-130 AIRCREW OPERATIONS. HE AGREED THAT THE GKR WOULD PROVIDE THE REQUIRED SAR SUPPORT OF THE C-130 CREWS AS IS NOW PROVIDED TO CAMBODIAN AIRCREWS. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT (SAR) TO BE PROVIDED TO C-130 CREWS BY THE USG.

8. (S) MR. THAPPANA MENTIONED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS PROJECT WITH SELECTED GKR DEFENSE OFFICIALS AND QUERIED WHETHER OR NOT AMB DEAN AND BG PALMER HAD BEEN MADE AWARE OF THIS PROJECT. IN RESPONSE TO HIS QUERY, HE WAS ADVISED THAT THEY WERE ONLY INFO ADEES ON THE PRELIMINARY MESSAGES. HE APPEARED SOMEWHAT
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CONCERNED THAT HE HAD BEEN INITIALLY APPROACHED BY THE RTG RATHER THAN THE USG. KRIANGSAK ENTERED THE CONVERSATION HERE CAUTIONING MR. THAPPANA TO REFRAIN FROM OVERCONCERN WITH MINUTIAE, ADVISING HIM TO PROVIDE IMMEDIATE FORMAL APPROVAL LETTER AND "GET THE PLANES FLYING."

9. (U) THE CONTEXT OF THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY BANGKOK. GDS-82.UNQUOTE
KINTNER

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NNN

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